(c) Recent increase in prices of chemical fertilizers has been done, after careful consideration of all aspects pertaining to fiscal sustainability and balanced nutrient application in the country.

**BIO-fertilizers**

4698. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how much money Government spend to promote bio-fertilizers, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) whether Government has been conducting continuous research through agricultural universities in the bio-fertilizers field;

(c) if so, what has been the output; and

(d) whether farmers have taken to bio-fertililzers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The National Project on Development and Use of Bio-fertilisers was started with the aim of promoting the use of bio-fertilizers. Under the project, a National Bio-fertilizer Development Centre with six Regional Centres have been established. Grants are also given for setting up of bio-fertilizer production units. The details of expenditure incurred on these activities, year-wise and State-wise, is being compiled and will be laid on the table of the House.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. New varieties of bio-fertilizers have been identified, tested and propagated.

(d) About 10,000 tonnes of different bio-fertilisers are being produced and marketed in the country.